

Signing of the 'U.S.-Algeria mutual legal assistance treaty

The U.S. Attorney General, Eric Holder, arrived in Algiers yesterday April 7, 2010 to sign a



Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) with Algeria. The treaty was signed in the afternoon by Mr. Holder and Mr. Tayeb Belaiz, the Algerian Minister of Justice. The two leaders discussed the reinforcement and expansion of legal and judicial cooperation, as well as the strengthening of bilateral relations, particularly in training and exchange of expertise.

Mr. Holder also met with the Minister of State, Interior and Local Assemblies, Mr. Noureddine Yazid Zerhouni, and was received this afternoon by His Excellency President Abdelaziz Bouteflika.

Attorney General Eric Holder Speaks at the Signing of the U.S.- Algeria Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty

April 7, 2010, Algiers, Algeria

Minister Belaiz, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

I am pleased to have the opportunity to be here in Algiers for the signing of the Treaty Between the United States and Algeria on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, otherwise known as an MLAT. This treaty establishes a comprehensive framework for obtaining evidence in criminal cases.

The proliferation of crime across national borders makes it essential that we develop tools for international cooperation in bringing to justice those criminals – including terrorists – who threaten our safety and security. This treaty will help us to achieve our common goal of ensuring that justice is done and that no criminal benefits by hiding evidence beyond our borders.

This new MLAT is emblematic of the good will between Algeria and the United States. It confirms the common goal we share in combating terrorism, organized crime and other serious violations of our laws.

The treaty will allow for the efficient exchange of evidence that officials in both the United States and Algeria need to investigate and prosecute criminal activity. It is truly comprehensive in its scope, covering all crimes and a wide range of assistance, including witness statements, physical evidence, bank and business records. I expect the treaty to complement the current and growing cooperation between our investigative agencies .

I want to express my appreciation and sincere gratitude to the members of the Algerian and U.S. delegations who worked very hard to fashion a treaty that will meet the requirements

of both our judicial systems and permit us to use the most modern procedures for law enforcement cooperation. Their commitment and diligence during the negotiations have made this treaty signing possible.

I am very much looking forward to working with the Algerian Ministry of Justice, the designated central authority responsible for implementing this Treaty on behalf of Algeria. I have no doubt that this cooperation relationship will serve our respective citizens well. I am particularly pleased to have been able to participate personally in this truly historic event. Thank you.